

Message Text

PAGE 01 TEL AV 02763 081004Z

21

ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 L-01 H-02 INR-05 PM-03

PRS-01 SP-02 NSC-05 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 SAB-01

SAM-01 IO-03 OMB-01 /054 W

----- 063859

R 080937Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHC 6572

INFO AMEMBSSY AMMAN

AMEMBSSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBSSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBSSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBSSY LONDON

AMEMBSSY MOSCOW

AMEMBSSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 2763

LIMDIS

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IS, SR

SUBJECT: ISRAELI COMMENTS ON SOVIET-
MIDDLE EAST DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY

1. WE MET SEVRAL DAYS AGON WITH MFA EASTERN
EUROPEAN DEPARTMENT HEAD, RAVIV. IN COURSE
OF DISCUSSION RAVIV NOTED CONTRAST BETWEEN
SOVIET'S PUBLIC RETICENCE ABOUT CONTACTS THEY
HAD RECENTLY INITIATED IN ISRAEL, AND FLURRY OF
HIGHLY PUBLICIZED SOVIET DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY
WITH ARAB WORLD.

2. ISRAELI S HAD BEEN INTERESTED THAT DURING
RECENT VISITS OF ARAB FOREIGN MINISTERS TO MOSCOW,
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PAGE 02 TEL AV 02763 081004Z

SOVIETS HAD EXPRESSED FULL SUPPORT FOR ARAB CAUSE
WHIL SIMULTANEOUSLY REITERATING FIRM POSITIN ON
ISRAEL'S RIGHT TO EXIST IN TERMS GUARANTEED TO
MAKE AN IMPRESSION ON ARABS, CHOOSING TO MAKE THIS

PINT CLEAREST WHEN SPEAKING TO FOREIGN MINISTERS
OF MOST INTRANSIGENT OF "CONFRONTATION STATES."
RAVIV SAID ISRAELIS ARE NOT DRAWING ANY RADICAL
CONCLUSIONS FROM THESE DEVELOPMENTS, BUT DO ASSUME
THAT THEY ARE DESIGNED IN LARGE PART TO IMPROVE
SOVIET "ELIGIBILITY" TO PLAY A ROLE AT GENEVA.

3. RAVIV COMMENTED ON GREAT CAUTION WITH WHICH
SOVIETS HAVE APPROACHED GENEVA CONFERENCE QUESTION
IN RECENT WEEKS. ISRAEL BELIEVES THIS WAS BASED
ON A NUMBER OF CONFLICTING CONSIDERATIONS: 1) AS
CO-CHAIRMAN, SOVIETS DON'T WANT GENEVA TO FAIL
(WHERE WOULD THEY GO NEXT?) 2) SOVIETS ARE CONCERNED
THAT GENEVA NOT RESULT IN EXCESSIVE DAMAGE
TO THEIR U.S. RELATIONSHIP, 3) SOVIETS WOULD LIKE
TO HAVE SOME UNDERSTANDING WITH U.S. ABOUT A
MIDDLE EAST ROLE, 4) THEY ARE UNCERTAIN ABOUT ARAB
DIMENSION OF PROBLEM, HOW DEEPLY THEY SHOULD BECOME
COMMITTED TO PLO, THEIR TIGHT RELATIONS WITH SADAT, ETC.

4. EVER SINCE VISIT OF SOVIET EMBASSIES TO ISRAEL
SEVERAL WEEKS AGO, ISRAELI PRESS HAS BEEN SPECULATING
ABOUT IMPLICATIONS FOR ISRAEL OF POSSIBLE CLOSER
RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS. SOME COMMENTATORS HAVE
WONDERED WHETHER THIS MIGHT NOT PROVIDE GOI WITH
GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH US. MOST
WRITERS HAVE TAKEN MUCH MORE DOWN TO EARTH VIEW.
IN MEANTIME, USUALLY WELL-INFORMED ISRAELIS ARE
WONDERING JUST WHAT FACTS MAY BE IN DEVELOPING
SOVIET-ISRAELI RELATIONSHIP. GOI IS HOLDING ITS
CARDS VERY CLOSE TO ITS CHEST.

5. IN MEETING THIS MORNING WITH NATIONAL WAR COLLEGE STUDY
GROUP, PRIME MINISTER RABIN AVOIDED DIRECT ANSWER TO QUESTION
CONCERNING PRESS REPORTS OF RECENT SOVIET VISITORS, IN HIS REPLY,
HE NOTED THAT ISRAEL "OCCASIONALLY" HAD CONTACTS WITH THE SOVIETS
SINCE BREAK OF RELATIONS, MAKING POINT THAT SOVIETS TOOK INITIATIVE
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PAGE 03 TEL AV 02763 081004Z

TO BREAK IN 1967 AND THEREFORE IT WAS UP TO MOSCOW TO TAKE
INITIATIVE TO RE-ESTABLISH RELATIONS. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE
DID NOT EXPECT SUCH SOVIET INITIATIVE AND THUS DID NOT EXPECT
SOVIETS TO BE IN POSITION TO PLAY EFFECTIVE ROLE WITH BOTH SIDES IN
MID EAST DISPUTE IN FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
VELIOTES

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CAIRO
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AMEMBSSY BUCHAREST

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